

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please amend claims 1–8 and 18, as discussed below.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (currently amended) A surgical instrument for treating female urinary stress incontinence comprising:
  - a) a sling contoured to the anatomical configuration of the mid-urethra, proximal urethra urethra, and base of the bladder for implanting into the lower abdomen of a female female; the sling providing support to mid-urethral and bladder neck sphincteric continence sites as well as support for the base of the bladder, said sling defining in part a tissue remodeling portion fixedly attached to and surrounding a mesh section; and
  - b) a sling transfer instrument having a distal end and a proximal end, said instrument defining in part a progressively curved shaft portion positioned between distal and proximal ends with an attached insertion handle located at its proximal end, and a means for attaching said sling to the distal end of said shaft.
2. (currently amended) The sling transfer surgical instrument of claim 1 wherein the first insertion handle further comprises a digit control accommodation, said digit control accommodation dimensioned approximately 2.5 to 4.5 centimeters (cm) ~~em~~ in length, 1.0 to 4.0 cm in width and 1.5 cm in depth.
3. (currently amended) The mesh-sling surgical instrument of claim 1 wherein said the mesh portion section is comprised of non-absorbable polymers and filaments of said the mesh section have a diameter ~~from about of approximately~~ .002 inch to ~~about~~ .08 inch.

4. (currently amended) The ~~mesh~~ sling surgical instrument of claim 1 wherein said the mesh portion section is comprised of absorbable polymers and filaments of said the mesh section have a diameter from about of approximately .012 inch to about 0.1 inch.

5. (currently amended) The ~~mesh~~ sling surgical instrument of claim 1 wherein said the mesh portion section is approximately 60 cm in length, approximately 1.5 cm to 3.0 cm at its widest and generally center most position center-most position, and approximately 1.0 cm wide at each of its opposite ends.

6. (currently amended) The ~~transfer~~ surgical instrument of claim 1 wherein said the progressively curved shaft portion has a diameter from about of approximately 3.5 millimeters (mm) mm to about 4.0 mm and a progressive curve with a maximum radius of approximately 5.1 cm.

7. (currently amended) The ~~transfer~~ surgical instrument of claim 1 wherein said the distal end of said shaft portion the sling transfer instrument is oriented in a direction opposite that of said shaft's the progressively curved shaft portion, said the distal end of said the progressively curved shaft portion being approximately 1.0 cm in length and approximately 4.0 mm in width, width at an end opposite an end with handle attached to said shaft portion.

8. (currently amended) The ~~transfer~~ surgical instrument of claim 1 wherein the progressively curved shaft is further comprised of a luminous coating.

9-17. (withdrawn)

18. (currently amended) A suprapubic method for treating female urinary stress incontinence comprising:

- a) providing a sling defining in part a tissue remodeling portion and a mesh ~~section and section, the sling~~ contoured to the anatomical configuration of the mid-urethra, proximal ~~urethra urethra~~, and base of the bladder;
- b) providing a first sling transfer instrument having a distal end and a proximal end with a progressively curved shaft ~~portion portion, the progressively curved shaft portion~~ positioned between said the distal and proximal ends ~~with and having~~ an insertion handle located at the instrument's proximal end;
- c) positioning the insertion handle of the first sling transfer ~~instrument's insertion handle instrument~~ within the human hand and utilizing said the insertion handle to guide the a curved tip at the instrument's distal end through the abdominal ~~wall, wall and through the retropubic space space~~, allowing ~~allow~~ the tip of the instrument to be in contact with the posterior surface of the pubic bone as it traverses the retropubic ~~space, space~~ and continues into the vagina;
- d) providing a second sling transfer instrument and repeating step (c) using the second sling transfer instrument;
- e) performing cystoscopy when the tips of both instruments curved tip of the first sling transfer instrument and the curved tip of the second sling transfer instrument are positioned within the vagina;
- f) attaching said the sling to the each of the distal ends of the sling transfer instruments positioned in accordance with steps (e) and (d); end of the first sling transfer instrument and the distal end of the second sling transfer instrument;
- g) withdrawing or otherwise positioning the distal ~~ends of the sling transfer instruments positioned in accordance with steps (e) and (d) end of the first sling transfer instrument and the distal end of the second sling transfer instrument~~ to cause the attached sling to form a U-shape around mid-urethral and bladder neck sphincter continence sites; and
- h) displacing said the sling from the first and second sling transfer instruments.

19. (original) The method of claim 18 further comprising the adjusting of sling tension via a sling tension measurement component.

20–21. (withdrawn)